

**Adaptability to Settlement Pattern and Choice of Sustenance Activities:
Emergence of Material Culture within the Saribas Malay in Betong, Sarawak**
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Abstract

Despite many job opportunities in the market and the challenges they have to face, some minority of the Saribas Malay community in Betong, Sarawak are still maintaining traditional subsistence activities based on the *nipah* tree (locally known as *apong*) such as *gula apong*, *garam apong cuka apong*, *jarik mayang*, *air sadap* and the sago tree (locally known as *mulong*) produce, *lemantak*. This research examines how the pattern of settlements and environment correlate with the Saribas Malay community's decision of choice for traditional sustenance activities in the area. The aim of this research is to identify cultural objects which still exist or demised from this traditional activity. Through the in-depth interview and participant observation, the result of the analysis would be the inference to (1) the lifestyle and livelihood of the Saribas Malay community as part of their strategy adaptation to the settlement pattern and environment and (2) the design of cultural objects, the use and selection of raw materials, methods and best practices in the production and (3) the strategy of resource sustainability.

Keywords: *Saribas Malay, traditional sustenance, settlement pattern, material culture, sustainability, indigenous knowledge*

Abstrak

Walaupun terdapat peluang pekerjaan dalam pasaran dan berdepan dengan pelbagai cabaran namun segelintir masyarakat Melayu Saribas di Bahagian Betong, Sarawak masih mengekalkan aktiviti sara hidup tradisional berasaskan pokok *nipah* (*apong*) seperti *gula apong*, *garam apong cuka apong*, *jarik mayang*, *air sadap* and pokok sago (*mulong*) seperti *lemantak*. Penyelidikan ini meneliti bagaimana corak penempatan dan persekitaran bersalingkait dengan pemilihan aktiviti sarahidup tradisional masyarakat Melayu Saribas di kawasan itu. Tujuan penyelidikan ini adalah untuk mengenalpasti budaya benda yang masih dan pernah wujud lantaran daripada aktiviti-aktiviti tradisi ini. Melalui kaedah temubual, penglibatan dan pemerhatian di lapangan, hasil dapatan analisis akan merungkai (1) pemilihan cara dan gaya hidup masyarakat sebagai strategi adaptasi mereka terhadap corak penempatan dan persekitaran dan (2) jenis dan rekabentuk budaya benda, penggunaan dan pemilihan bahan, kaedah dan amalan terbaik dalam pembuatan budaya benda serta (3) strategi pelestarian sumber bahan mentah.

Katakunci: *Melayu Saribas, aktiviti sarahidup, corak penempatan, budaya benda, kelestarian, kearifan tempatan*